

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

December 15, 2004

The Honorable George W. Bush  
President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Bush,

We are writing to urge you to include strong funding for the nation's nonproliferation programs in your fiscal year 2006 budget request. While there was a modest increase for U.S.- based DOE programs in last year's budget, most of the U.S. – Russia threat reduction programs at the Departments of Defense, Energy and State were either flat funded or saw their budgets decrease. The 9-11 Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States noted that the Nunn-Lugar programs managed through DoD are "now in need of expansion, improvement and resources." Furthermore, several programs continue to be on hold because of unresolved liability concerns.

In addition to increased funding, we urge you to take several steps in your budget request to improve U.S. security in accordance with your promise, made in a speech last February, that "America will not permit terrorists and dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most deadly weapons." At the top of that list are nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons.

- **Request permanent authority to annually waive certification requirements for Cooperative Threat Reduction and for construction of a chemical weapons destruction facility in Russia.**

As you know, authority was provided by Congress in the fiscal year 2003 defense authorization act, allowing you to waive, each year, the general certification criteria for the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program. This waiver was only approved for three years, and no authority has been granted to waive the CTR general certification criteria for fiscal year 2006 and beyond. To ensure program efficiency and continuity, this authority should be made permanent. This will allow you to assess the need for a waiver each year and give you the ability to extend one should it be in our national interest.

Similarly, the CTR program is also restricted from constructing a chemical weapons destruction facility in Shchuch'ye, Russia. For the past two fiscal years, Congress approved single-year authority for the President to waive the funding restrictions. In the fiscal year 2005 National Defense Authorization Act, Congress granted the president the right to exercise an annual waiver for the next three years in the construction of the Shchuch'ye plant. To avoid costly interruptions, this authority should also be made permanent.

- **Reach rapid resolution of disputes with Russia over liability language in nonproliferation agreements.**

In the summer of 2003, agreements governing two major U.S. nonproliferation programs with Russia were allowed to expire because of differences between both countries over revising the liability terms of the agreements. The Administration has insisted that Russia accede to much stricter terms to protect U.S. personnel – even in cases of deliberate sabotage – than Russia is prepared to accept. The deadlock on this subject has stalled the Nuclear Cities Initiative, preventing it from finding alternative employment for Russian nuclear scientists and has delayed for over a year construction of facilities in Russia and the United States for the disposition of excess plutonium. At a time when the possibility of the knowledge of the world's most dangerous weapons slipping into the hands of terrorists is a gathering threat, it is vital that you resolve this issue immediately.

- **Expand threat reduction programs to other countries.**

DoD's Nunn-Lugar programs, the Energy Department's MPC&A program, as well as the State Department's Nonproliferation and Disarmament Fund, have authority to spend program resources in regions outside of Russia and the former Soviet states. Some cooperative nonproliferation efforts are already underway in Iraq and Libya, and the United States recently agreed to assist Albania in the destruction of its chemical weapons. There are other countries where some limited steps should be taken to develop or improve a threat reduction program, including India and Pakistan, where first steps might focus on enhancing physical security and guard force reliability, as well as China, where small-scale cooperation in the area of export controls and related issues has already occurred.

- **Create a system of bi-annual, performance-focused meetings between high-level U.S. and Russian political officials on threat reduction.**

We urge you to create a mechanism for semi-annual meetings between high-level U.S. and Russian officials to assess nonproliferation efforts. The purpose of these meetings would be to comprehensively evaluate threat reduction progress, receive reports from program managers on advances and impediments in each program, and negotiate solutions to implementation obstacles. As you know, nonproliferation programs benefited during the 1990s from the regular attention and involvement of Vice President Gore and Prime Minister Chernomyrdin and their senior staff members – under the auspices of the “Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission” – who provided high-level political incentive to overcome technical and bureaucratic threat reduction implementation problems.

- **Ensure full funding for the Global Threat Reduction Initiative.**

In May, the Secretary of Energy launched a “Global Threat Reduction Initiative” (GTRI) which will integrate several programs involved in cleanout of nuclear materials from facilities around the world. However, the plan for this new initiative did not call for increasing the budgets for these programs above the current \$50 million consolidated annual baseline.

Congress also recently approved legislation authorizing the Secretary of Energy to lead an "accelerated, comprehensive worldwide effort" to secure, remove, and eliminate the threats posed by materials and equipment that could be used to produce a nuclear weapon or so-called dirty bomb. The legislation – approved in the FY 2005 National Defense Authorization Act – grants the Department of Energy (DOE) a number of authorities to work with foreign nations to persuade them to relinquish their materials and shut down vulnerable facilities. Congress also provided an additional \$30 million in the FY 2005 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act to accelerate GTRI and related global cleanout initiatives. This increased funding level should constitute a new \$80 million annual baseline for GTRI in fiscal year 2006 and subsequent out-years.

- **Create a director of nonproliferation within the White House.**

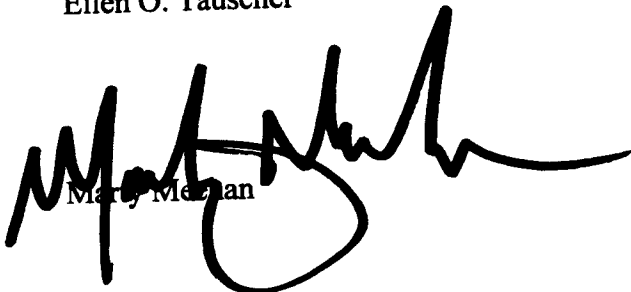
Currently, as you know, nonproliferation efforts are executed by three different departments. While they all have had success, they are not guided by an overall plan and are not supported by a single individual who has the ability to ensure accountability and that they are meeting your objectives. Because of this lack of high-level attention and leadership, some programs have either lapsed or been burdened with unrelated restrictions. We recommend that you create a director of nonproliferation position within the White House who would ensure that these valuable programs are used more effectively to reduce the threat of weapons of mass destruction. Such a coordinating function has been recommended in several reports including the 1999 Deutch Commission to Assess the Organization of the Federal Government to Combat the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.



This director would be given full budget authority over the nation's nonproliferation programs and tasked with designing and implementing a strategic plan for addressing the threat of weapons of mass destruction.

We appreciate your attention to these recommendations and look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

  
Ellen O. Tauscher

  
Marty Meehan

  
John Spratt  
  
Chet Edwards